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GEORGE W. SHERMAN

(At 25 Years of Age)

Lieutenant of Company C, Twentieth Regiment Connecticut Volunteer Infantry while in the service of the Federal Government in its conflict from 1861 to 1865 with certain States of the Union for the preservation of the Republic. Commissioned Captain, February 16, 1865, to rank from February 11, by Hon. Wm. A. Buckingham, "War Governor" of the State of Connecticut.

A NARRATIVE IN REMEMBRANCE OF THE TWENTIETH REGIMENT CONNECTICUT VOLUNTEERS

BY CAPTAIN GEORGE W. SHERMAN

“When to the sessions of sweet silent thought,
I summon up remembrance of things past,
I sigh the lack of many things I sought.”

In the following narrative it is not the purpose that it be romantic; but to record a few incidents and events of lesser importance, out of the innumerable number connected with the 20th Regiment Connecticut Volunteers, while in the Federal Army during the eventful and most momentous days of our Republic. Most momentous days indeed: For the great and terrible conflict, was to decide whether the nation was to perish from off the earth, or continue to live and under God, have a new birth of Freedom!

A NEW BIRTH OF FREEDOM FOR THE NATION

The contest was essentially a people’s contest, said Lincoln, “On one side of the Union,” he said, “it is a struggle for maintaining in the world, that form and substance of government whose leading object is to elevate the condition of men, to lift artificial weights from all shoulders, to clear the paths of laudable pursuits for all, to afford all an unfettered start and a fair chance in the race of life.” And he further

believed, that the issue embraced more than the fate of these United States. "It presents," he said, "to the whole family of man, the question whether a Constitutional Republic or Democracy—a government of the people by the same people—can or cannot maintain its territorial integrity against its own domestic foes!"

In its "new birth of Freedom" the nation now lives, and has become more glorious! With it "Old Glory" the "Flag of the Free," of red, white and blue!

"Your flag and my flag! To every star and stripe
The drums beat as hearts beat and fifes shrilly
pipe!

Your flag and my flag—a blessing in the skies;
Your hope and my hope—it never hid a lie!
Home-land and far-land and half the world
around,

Old Glory hears our glad salute and ripples to
the sound!"

From "Your Flag and My Flag,"
Wilbur D. Nesbit, Author.

"There are many flags in many lands,
There are flags of every hue;
But there is no flag, however grand,
Like our own red, white and blue.

"Forever float that standard sheet!
Where breathes the foe but falls before us,
With Freedom's soil beneath our feet,
And Freedom's banners streaming o'er us;"

The people of every nation throughout the world, are eager, to leave their native land and seek a new home and protection under the "Flag of the Free" that the "Boys in Blue," by their valor made more glorious and revered!

THE ARMY OF BOYS IN BLUE!

"The war"—Civil War—"was fought to a finish by a grand army of boys"—Boys in Blue. "Of 2,778,304 Union soldiers enlisted, over two millions were not twenty-two years of age!—1,151,438 were not even nineteen. There were even one hundred thousand on the Union rolls who were no more than fifteen years of age!" Brave boys that were in blue!

APPEAL OF PATRIOTIC GOVERNOR AND RESPONSE

The Twentieth Regiment Connecticut Volunteer Infantry—"Buckingham Legion"—was recruited and organized in response to the call of the immortal Lincoln on July 1st, 1862, for 300,000 volunteers, and the patriotic appeal of Gov. Buckingham of July 3d, 1862 to "Citiznes of Connecticut."

"You are again called upon," he said "to rally to the support of the government. The cause of civil liberty must be advanced, the supremacy of the government must be maintained. * * * *

The Rebellion, contending with the desperation of a hopeless and wicked cause, must be met with equal energy. Close your manufactories and workshops, turn aside from your farms and business, leave for a while your families and your homes, meet face to face the enemies of your liberties Haste * * * * and speedily secure the blessings of peace and good government!"

"Ah, well I mind me how they came,
From shop and furrowed fields,
With kindled eye and hearts aflame,
The patriot sword to wield!"

"Their country asked them for their lives
They did not answer nay,
But from their homes and friends and kin
They bravely marched away.

"Still undaunted, still united
By the fires our fathers lighted."

PARTING OF PATRIOTIC MOTHER AND LOYAL SON

Private Judson Lewis, connected with our narrative—known among his most intimate friends as "Jed" Lewis—was the youngest son of Jabez and Mary M. Lewis. "He was a fine looking young man, of dark complexion; and of a quiet and peaceful disposition." For the first time we will meet him at home with his aged and loving mother in Ansonia, Connecticut. He had enlisted in the 20th Regiment Connecticut Volunteers for the defence of his Country; and the time had come for his departure; and he was lingering with suppressed emotion beside his anxious and loving mother. Were they meeting for the last time on earth? Did they realize fully that it might be so? Who knows? If they did, what heroism and loyalty of the son! What a great sacrifice of the mother! What pain and anguish at the final parting for mother and son!

"When eyes are beaming what never tongue
 might tell,
When tears are streaming from their crystal
 cell,
When hands are linked that dread to part,
When heart is met by throbbing heart;
Oh bitter! bitter! is the smart of those who say
 farewell.

It is said in verse:

"The mother who conceals her grief,
While to her breast her son she presses,
Then breathes a few brave words and brief
With no one but her secret God
To know the pain that weighs upon her,
Shed holy blood as e'er the sod
Received on Freedom's field of honor!"

So it was with the thousands of dear mothers, that parted with their sons, to be sacrificed for our country's salvation.

What for the loyal sons?

“Happy the land which thus can claim
Such loyal sons her own!
Within whose breast, that altar flame
Of Spartan love hath grown!
Which, e'en with life, defends the State,
Nor deems such sacrifice too great.”

“Oh, rare and loyal was the sacrifice!”

“For you and me they put their armor on.”

PARTING FROM LOVED ONES

At an early hour of September 11th, 1862, the day of the departure of the 20th Regiment Connecticut Volunteers, its camp at Oyster Point, New Haven, Connecticut, was full of activity getting ready to take cars for the front. It was thronged, with anxious and sad relatives of the “boys in blue.” Wives, sisters and daughters are parting from their loved ones! “Some are parting with mothers, who hold them and press them to their hearts, again and again, and say nothing, nothing but kisses ad tears, tears and kisses—the divine mingling of agony and love!”

Soon, in the midst of partings, of great excitement and confusion, came the stern command “fall in;” then in greater excitement came the short but memorable march of the “boys” for the cars that awaited them. How they were followed to the cars by dear ones; who kept in sight their own, to give more encouragement and one more expression of affection!

Up the sides, and into the open platform cars the “boys” clambered. When done, how quickly, and anxiously some scanned the faces in the crowd and found a dear one who was recognized and given the last “good bye!”

THE DEPARTURE FOR THE WAR

Near 10 o'clock in the forenoon, amid the cheers of the great crowd of patriotic people who had assembled to witness the departure, and mid the tearful farewell of the loved ones left behind, the 20th Regiment Connecticut Volunteers that had so promptly responded to the call of Lincoln, started on its three years campaign to aid in the suppression of the wicked rebellion.

The precious human freight departed, and among the precious sons of loving mothers was Judson Lewis of Co. B. Judson Lewis just from his mother's embrace; so strong and robust of health, was one of the thousands of precious sons defending our country, that never returned alive; but laid down their lives while in the midst of promising manhood! For what? was it not that this glorious Republic might continue to live, that the peace and plenty that now are ours, might be enjoyed by the millions; and the millions yet to be?

"We fought, not for ourselves alone," said Gen. Sherman, "but for those who are to come after us."

"For you and me they put their armor on!"

THE RECEPTION EX ROUTE

I will not attempt to narrate the many pleasant and unpleasant happenings while on our way to New York City on the open platform cars—used for transporting lumber—or to Port Monmouth, New Jersey, by steamboat, and by cars to Philadelphia, the city of great hospitality. We arrived in the latter place in the forenoon of September 12th, very tired and hungry. The benevolent and patriotic people were waiting and watching for all such to arrive, regardless of the time of day or night. In fact, when a troop train left Jersey City a telegram was sent to the "Union" and the Cooper Shop Volunteer Refreshment Saloons; a gun was fired, and away the people hurried to the big sheds and made ready to feed the hungry soldiers.

We were royally entertained with every arrangement for comfort. While the patriotic ladies were bountifully feeding the hungry bodies, they supplied each of us with a pocket New Testament. So, they provided food for the soul as well as the body; and to every soldier of a regiment that passed through the city during the war they done the same. The smiles and the words of encouragement, given by those dear women, long lingered in the memory of many veterans.

May the loyal services, of the noble women who assisted in the preservation of our Republic, be inscribed by a grateful nation, on monuments of Bronze to be seen and read by the coming generations!

I will delay long enough, to record something more of the benevolent and patriotic work of the "Refreshment Saloons." Seven barrels of coffee and 15,000 cooked rations were often made in one day. 1,300,000 meals were served by the two organizations from their opening to their discontinuance.

"Writing paper and envelopes were provided, enabling the soldiers to write home. All letters were stamped free of cost to the writers and mailed by the entertainers."

It was but a short distance from the place where we were so royally entertained, to the cars for Baltimore at which city we arrived on the 13th of September, where we were lunched by the "Union Relief Committee." Again we took cars and speeded for Washington, where we were treated to boiled salt pork, bread and coffee, a meal that no one who partook of it would ever forget. The tables we stood up to, on which the meal was served, were saturated with pork grease; the coffee cups so greasy the coffee tasted more of pork. The floor was so slippery because of pork grease, that it was difficult for one to walk without slipping down.

I will not attempt to record further the movements of our regiment, until its arrival at Fairfax station, Virginia, in the evening after its hard march of 25 miles.

A SEVERE EXPERIENCE IN WINTER

While there was much, that transpired between our arrival in Washington and our departure for our camp near Fairfax station, that is interesting and most worthy of mention, yet, such will be left for some future historian.

It serves the purpose of the writer better, to proceed from the time of the departure of our regiment from our camp near Fairfax station January 17th, 1863; but I will briefly refer to some incidents occurring during our stay at the latter place, from November 17th, 1862, to January 17th, 1863. While camped here the regiment suffered from hunger not having sufficient rations issued to them. The men had not been paid in two months, and some lacked means to obtain sufficient nourishment, so some were half starved. Besides, they were enfeebled by the cold and wintry weather. Some nights it was painful, as one lay upon the frozen ground—on a few boughs for a bed—to hear many hacking and coughing, from colds. It seemed to me most wonderful that so many of Company B, were fit to march when called upon to do so, for they were further enfeebled, from having no shelter, day or night, except that afforded them in bush huts, open in front to the driving snow, and cold, and piercing winds.

Cheerfully we suffered and endured together in hardships and privations, with but one purpose, to save our country from its armed enemies.

The immortal Lincoln, during the great struggle for the existence of our Republic, said: "We accepted this war for one object, a worthy object, and the war will end when that object is attained. Under God, I hope it will never end until that time." The "Boys in Blue" believed in him, and shared with him in his determination and hope.

A DUTIFUL SOLDIER

Private Judson Lewis, after the march of 25 miles with his Regiment and company, reached Fairfax station in good

condition. Here let me record, comrade Lewis, gave me as his Orderly Sergeant, no trouble. I do not recall his complaining about his rations, or while being detailed for guard or picket duty, even when called upon after a long and tedious march, and perhaps to be marched many miles more and too, before he had an opportunity to make a can of coffee or eat a few hardtack to satisfy his hunger. I recall nothing occurring during my experience with my comrade Lewis, while Orderly Sergeant of Co. B, that mars the good impression of him. It is equally true of others, of my comrades of Co. B, they too, have left in my memory, good and lasting impressions that are and will be cherished as long as I may live.

When orders were received on the morning of January 17th, 1863, to be ready to march from Fairfax station, as orderly sergeant I gathered such as I believed were unable to withstand the fatigue of the march, and reported such to the Surgeon. Comrade Lewis connected with our narrative, was not one of the number but ready and willing as usual to perform his whole duty.

Our march from Fairfax station, to what proved to be our destination for the winter, was most trying and arduous.

HUNGRY SOLDIERS

We had but little to eat on the last day of the march, in fact it was thirty six hours after our arrival before rations could be obtained to issue to us. On the march some men were so hungry, that passing where rebel cavalry had fed their horses, they gathered up what few stray kernels of corn, they could find, some of which were found soaking in the water in the prints—made in the mud—of the horses hoofs, and ate them to satisfy their knawing hunger.

A NIGHT UNDER SNOW

On the night after our arrival from Fairfax station, the comrades tired and hunger none too well satisfied, lay with-

out shelter on the cold ground and sought rest and sleep; and while they slept,

"Silent, and soft, and slow
Desceends the snow.
The snowflakes fell,
And on the ground lie thickly deep."
While underneath, are tired soldiers,
Asleep.

Before morning snow had fallen to the depth of a foot or more and covered us; and it was to those of the early ones to arise from such a cover, a scene that few ever saw. The camp was of mounds as in a burying-ground in winter time; and where as well there was no appearance of life. There was merriment as one after another appeared out of his grave of snow and shook himself.

COMMENDATORY ORDER

Some time after the establishment of our winter quarters near Stafford Court House, Virginia, the following order was issued by our Division commander, which recites some of the hardships and privations we experienced on our march from Fairfax station:—

"Headquarters 1st Div. 12th A. C.,
near Stafford Court House, Va.
January 25th, 1863.
General Orders, No. 3.

"The Brig. Gen. commanding this Division desires to express to the troops of this command his highest appreciation of their soldierly conduct in the recent arduous march from Fairfax station to this place, under severe hardships and privations, which resulted from the storm commencing with and accompanying us during our march, and over roads seemingly impassable, their patient endurance and prompt performance of every duty merits the highest praise. Sol-

diers deprived by unexpected obstacles of proper subsistence and exposed to inclement weather without shelter, and yet enduring all without a murmur, deserve the warmest thanks not only of their commander but the nation they so faithfully served.

By command of
Brig. Gen. A. S. Williams,
W. D. Williams, Capt and
Assist. Adj. Gen."

WINTER QUARTERS

It was not long after the night we spent under the snow, when we removed to the grounds chosen for our camp for the winter.

“ Make we here our camp for winter,
And, through sleet and snow,
Pitchy knot and beechen splinters
On our hearth shall glow.”

Here we put up log huts, and to exclude the wind, rain and snow, crevices were filled with Virginia mud. The huts had ridge roofs made of four pieces of canvas—two shelter, or “dog tents”—that furnished much light in the hut making it pleasant. Some made a door for their hut, out of pieces of hardtack boxes; and with strips of leather from old discarded army shoes, hinges were made, and fastened in place with nails from cracker boxes. Many of the huts had a chimney and fireplace, constructed of pieces of wood embedded in an abundance of mud, and some of the chimneys were topped off with a barrel without heads.

The interior of some huts might have been thought “home-like,” being fitted up with some conveniences, and to the taste of the occupant, out of what was obtainable.

By this time the comrades in their experience as soldiers, had learned how, and were disposed to make themselves comfortable.

As one passed a hut, on his way down the company street, sweet melodious voices could be heard from within,

voices that had been listened to in church choir at home; from another might be heard, the reading of welcome letters from home; and from another, pleasant conversation; discussions on the war; camp gossip, or perhaps a lively game of penny-ante, or seven-up.

As one peered through cracks in the door of a hut, one might be seen making his coffee—the soldier's solace—over the fire on the hearth, and in a kettle made of a tomato can; in another hut, one may be seen writing a letter home, by the light of a piece of candle or by the bright and cheerful light from the fireplace. As one comes to another, there might be seen the face of one in deep thought; sitting before the bright fire on the hearth. Are there tears on the upturned face? Doubtless, for his mind is filled with thoughts of home, sweet home; and of some loved one there!

The deleterious effects, upon the health of many members of the regiment resulting from the great fatigue experienced on the arduous march; and from the night spent under the snow, and lying on the cold wet ground, soon became evident. It became my painful duty as orderly sergeant of Co. B, to have to report many members of that company for treatment; and one of the number was the heretofore robust and healthy Judson Lewis. Disease that lurks in hardships, privations and hunger, at last claimed him as a victim. Soon we find him in the hospital delirious with typhoid fever.

According to medical authorities thousands of soldiers, serving their country in the army, during the civil war suffered and lost their lives, by typhoid fever contracted from conditions they could not have avoided; doubtless our comrade Lewis was one of such.

Typhoid fever it is written, may be caused without infection of external origin. The development of typhoid fever among troops during hard campaigning involving much fatigue is well known.

THE DUTIFUL SOLDIER SUCCUMBS TO DISEASE.

On Saturday, February 21st, 1863, near the dawn of day, in a tent not lighted, perhaps not heated, and during a cold and driving snow storm, the mortal life of Judson Lewis, peacefully ended!

“Comrade, rest, thy warfare is o'er!
“Spirit! thy labor is o'er,
Thy term of probation is run,
Thy steps are now bound for the untrodden
shore,
And the race of immortals begun.

“What is death
To him who meets it with an upright heart?
A quiet haven, where his shatter'd bark
Harbours secure, till the rough storm is past,
Perhaps a passage overhung with clouds,
But at its entrance, a few leagues beyond
Opening to kinder skies and milder suns,
And seas pacific as the soul that seeks them.”

A NOBLE SURGEON

Dr. James Wadsworth Terry, Surgeon of our regiment, and two nurses were with our comrade when he succumbed to his deadly disease, and passed out of this life. There is no doubt our comrade received perhaps more consolation during his sickness, and better medical attention—which would have been a great comfort to his aged mother and friends to have known—than many other soldiers that suffered and died in hospitals at the front.

Dr. Terry I know, from having associated with him was a conscientious and I believe a skilled physician, and as having a christian spirit, being very kindhearted and sympathetic. It is written of his brother Gen. Alfred Howe Terry—“Hero of Fort Fisher”—that he too was

modest; generous; of a kind hearted nature; and was apt to bend down to little children and caress them; and was an unflinching friend. This eulogy of Gen. Terry accords with the pleasant impression lingering in my mind of his brother, Dr. Terry, our very kind hearted surgeon, and unflinching friend. Dr. Terry's sympathetic nature, was revealed when, after he had been many hours of the cold night ministering to relieve the suffering of our comrade to the last, and he turns from the dead, and so tenderly, hastens to the side of our sick comrade Johnson.

After the close of the great conflict, when one was seeking material for a Biography of J. Wadsworth Terry, M. D., and sought of him something of himself to be used, he refrained from saying aught of himself; but wrote in praise of comrades as follows: "There were many fine officers and men in the regiment, among the latter I know of none more worthy of mention than my orderly, Peleg Brown, who, in every battle was by my side rendering assistance to the wounded, and in hospital gave most conscientious care to the sick and suffering.

The above portrays the true character of the two noble men!

BODY OF COMRADE LEWIS ORDERED SENT TO HIS MOTHER

There must have been a predetermined understanding or a quick decision, as to the disposal of the body of our comrade, as quite early on the day of his death a special order was signed and issued from the headquarters of the regiment by Col. William R. Wooster commanding, "to deliver the body of Judson Lewis the deceased, to the Express Company at Washington, for transportation to his family in Connecticut." No doubt the suggestion of sending the body of the son home to the mother, came promptly from the kindhearted, and thoughtful commander, Col. Wooster.

INTERESTING LETTER FROM COMRADE

In the hospital tent where comrade Lewis died was another comrade of Co. B,—“now with the great majority”—lying sick with the same deadly disease. In after years I was moved by a desire to learn something more if possible, of the particulars relating to the last sickness of Comrade Lewis and wrote comrade Johnson, with that mind in view. Here follows, in part, the letter received:—

“New Haven, Conn.,
March 6th,

Mr. George Sherman

Dear Comrade:

* * * * * You inquire about ‘Jed’ Lewis. I remember ‘Jed’ well, he died while I was so very sick at Stafford Court House. He lay on the opposite side of the passage way from me in a wall tent, it was not lighted, the snow drifted through at the bottom, and we had some very cold weather there as you well remember. I don’t think ‘Jed’ froze to death, I think the fever that he had would keep him from freezing. I had been delirious for a long time, it seems now as though it must have been two or three weeks, when I regained consciousness. It was along the latter part of the night and very cold. I realized that something unusual was taking place, I managed to raise myself on my arms and looked at where ‘Jed’s’ bunk was and saw three standing around it. Dr. Terry was one of them, he looked around and saw me, and came over to my bunk, ‘well,’ he says, ‘Johnson I am surprised, how do you feel?’ I answered by asking him if he thought I would get well, he says, ‘I hope so, as soon as you are able to travel I shall discharge you, you never will be able to do duty again.’ I did not think so. I asked him what the trouble was over there, he said ‘Jed’ Lewis was dead.’ That took all my courage out of me. We both had the same typhoid fever. I did not get

around much until a few days before we went to Chancellorsville.

Your comrade,

Jerome Johnson

I received a special order, dated February 21st from the headquarters of my regiment and approved at headquarters of the Brigade, Division and 12th Army Corps, detailing me on special duty for three days. The order reached me early Sunday morning, February 22nd my birthday. From the order I learned for the first time of the death of comrade Lewis, and of my promotion. The order follows:—

"Headquarters 20th Conn. Vols.,
Stafford C. H., Va., Feby. 21st, 1863.

Special Order.

2d Lieut George W. Sherman is hereby detailed to deliver the body of Judson Lewis, deceased, to the Express Company at Washington, for transportation to his family in Connecticut.

Lieut. Sherman will return within three days, during which time he will procure his proper uniform as a 2d Lt., he having just been promoted from 1st Sergeant.

(Signed) Wm. B. Wooster,
Lieut. Col. 20th Conn. Vols.,
Commanding Regt.

The weather on the morning of the 22d, when I received the order detailing me for special duty, was very cold, and much depth of snow on the ground and it was still snowing hard as on the previous day; and as the order of detail did not specify any particular day to proceed; and only the time allowed in going and coming, I used my judgment and chose the 23rd, as the proper time to commence the performance of the duties assigned me.

Sergeant Edward Root of Co. B—a stalwart in deed—whom I shall always remember for his disinterested kindness and generosity, and six other comrades of Co. B—that I am sorry to say I am unable at this day to recall the name of one of them—were the detail to accompany me with the body of our comrade down Aquia Creek as far as Aquia Creek Landing.

Very early on the morning of February 23d, 1863, the body of our comrade covered with a piece of shelter tent for a shroud, was solemnly borne by comrades on a stretcher, from the tent where he closed his life, to near the foot of our company street, from which place we were to depart on our mission. No more, will his response “here,” at the Roll Call, be heard by his comrades!

To day the mortal clay,
Is tenderly borne away!
For dearest kin of son,
A solemn duty is done!

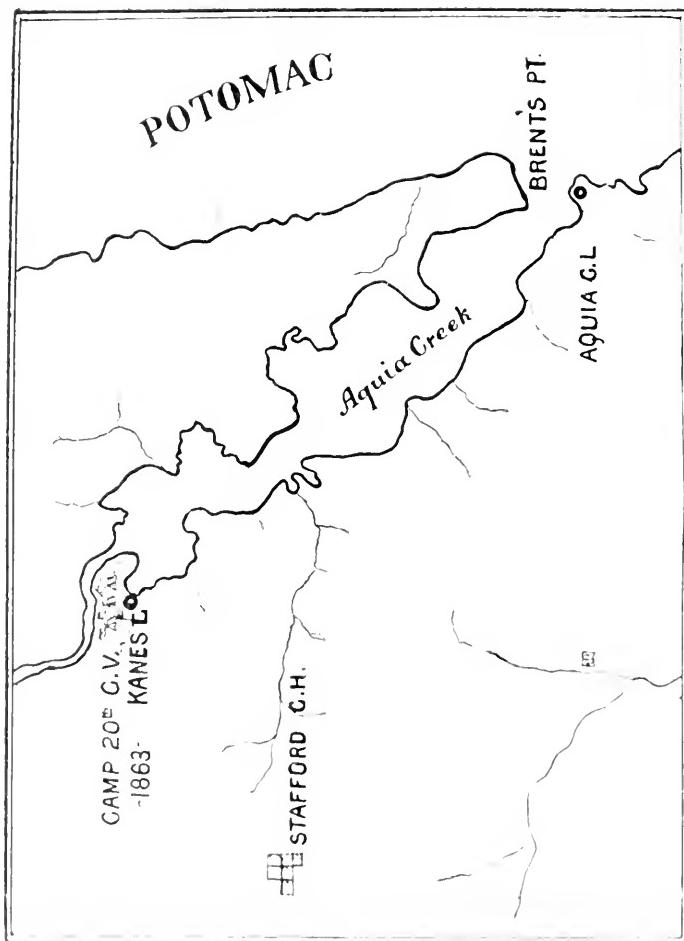
START FOR KANE'S LANDING

It had stopped snowing but it had continued severely cold and a piercing wind prevailed; but early in the morning we started through the deep snow, and facing the cold and piercing wind for Kane's Landing about three quarters of a mile from our camp and at the head of Aquia Creek.

The weather was such that but few would be likely out of their comfortable huts. I do not recall that any one but the members of the detail were present at our start.

Our silent and very solemn march with the dead, through the deep snow; and in the cold and piercing wind,

At “Kane's Landing,” supplies were distributed to a part of the Army of the Potomac, that were towed up the creek in canal boats by stern-wheelers. Kane's Landing was so named for Brig. Gen. Thomas Leiper Kane, commanding at one time, the 1st Brigade, 1st Division of the 12th Army Corps. He was a brother to Dr. Elisha Kent Kane the American Arctic Explorer, who commanded the second Arctic expedition sent out by Henry Grinnell in search of Sir John Franklin in 1850-1851.



Map of Aquia Creek, Va., showing location of
20th Conn. Vols. camp in the Civil War; of
Kane's Landing and Aquia Creek Landing.

has often since reminded me of what a funeral procession might be in the Arctic region!

Aquia Creek that we were to descend is an affluent of the Potomac River; and Aquia Creek Landing, is situated at the junction of the creek with the Potomac; and in a straight course, is about five miles from Kane's Landing. Aquia Creek Landing was the only place where a coffin could be procured for the body of our comrade; and where one could take steamboat for Washington with the body from there to be transported to the relatives in Connecticut.

Neither the comrades that were to go to Aquia Creek Landing nor myself, had before descended Aquia Creek. We were expected to reach the landing for a purpose; doubtless none had a thought but we would be able to overcome and remove every obstacle in the way. We had the pluck of "Yankees" that we were.

At Kane's Landing we were very fortunate in finding at the landing a large flat-bottomed craft, that had been used on Aquia Creek, and doubtless by the Confederate forces while in that vicinity. It was taken possession of with the poles we found for pushing the craft along; also some pieces of boards that proved to be of great service on our way down the creek.

A VERY TRYING TIME DOWN AQUIA CREEK

There was ample room on the craft for the stretcher with the body; and space for all aboard to move about freely. Thus we were equipped for our passage with the dead down the creek; and soon we were ready to commence what proved to be a task and an experience that is yet, vivid in my mind.

On our way down the creek in the performance of our mission in the presence of the dead, there was no suggestion of levity, for we knew not how soon it might be with one of us, as with our comrade who but a few weeks before

was strong and robust in health, but now, lying still in death before us. The passage in the presence of the dead, must have been to my comrades a most solemn and oppressive affair; and as I recall, the passage was made in comparative silence.

The faithful "Boys in Blue," labored incessantly the entire distance down the creek without one complaint or murmur. They were unarmed, yet, they were so wholly occupied in the service due their comrade that it was evident that if they had been fired upon, from the banks of the creek by guerrillas they would not have hesitated one moment to have continued on our mission.

We were about nine hours getting to Aquia Creek Landing owing to the arduous labor and the difficulties experienced on our way. The creek, during the severe weather, had frozen over; and for about four miles of the route, the ice had to be broken up, by two or three comrades at the bow of the craft, with the pieces of boards we so thoughtfully brought along; while others pushed with the poles as a way was cleared admitting of further movement toward our goal.

When my mind reverts to the pictured scene of the intrepid Continentals, battling with the cakes of floating ice that confronted and opposed them, while crossing the Delaware, it recalls to my mind, our experience, while battling as it were, with the barrier of ice, that confronted and opposed us on that, to us memorable day during our passage down Aquia Creek fifty-four years ago, with the body of Comrade Judson Lewis!

To sail down Aquia Creek, in and out of its numerous and pleasant little coves, wafted by refreshing winds of Summer; when all along its banks are green; all nature smiling; when all aboard is suggestive of mirth but life and animation; and comforts plenty; then it would be a pleasure, and would be in after years recalled along with pleasant thoughts. But our passage down Aquia Creek

on February 23d, 1863, when all along its banks were clothed in the garb of Winter; midst cold and piercing winds; laboring too with might and main; with comforts none; and while in the presence of grim death, was most unpleasant and arduous; and our experience during our passage down the creek while performing the duty due our dead comrade, is recalled in after years only along with thoughts of unpleasantness!

It was nearly dark when we succeeded in reaching Aquia Creek Landing and getting the body of our comrade ashore. We were all very tired, lame and hungry too, after finishing our hard task.

Coffins (pine boxes) were furnished at the landing by the government for hundreds of bodies of soldiers that had been killed or died of wounds or disease in the Army of the Potomac; and brought there to be taken to Washington by boat and from there sent to relatives, in different parts of the Union.

As we were unavoidably delayed in reaching Aquia Creek Landing on the 23d in time for a boat for Washington that day, I was somewhat doubtful about being able to accomplish my part of the mission within the three days allowed, and as I wished to avoid being reprimanded I obtained the endorsement—on the order—of Dr. Wm. H. White the kindhearted Post Surgeon at the landing, saying that I was “unavoidably detained at this Post and

At an early period of the Civil War, the Confederates erected batteries on Aquia Creek, near Aquia Creek Landing, which would command the entrance to the creek, from the Potomac.

May 16th, 1861, Captain James Harmon Ward---a retired naval officer---organized the “Potomac Flotilla”---the first war fleet---consisting of four steam crafts; and he was placed in command of it. With the flotilla he on Friday, May 31st, 1861 attacked the batteries on Aquia Creek and after a severe bombardment silenced them; and on the following morning resumed the cannonading, burning and destroying the depot with all its stores.

Aquia Creek Landing, was thus secured; occupied, and retained until the close of the war. The position secured on the creek proved to be of great importance to the Union forces, for the landing and distribution of supplies for the Army of the Potomac.

cannot proceed onward until tomorrow morning."

After a while a suitable place was found for the body over night, also a place under cover for my comrades.

A SLEEPLESS NIGHT ON A CANAL BOAT

"And welcome was the peep of day."

Sergeant Root, found that I could be accommodated under cover for the night in the cabin of a canal boat, used in bringing supplies for the Army of the Potomac.

As I entered the cabin—that was not in those days very spacious in such crafts—I saw in the dim light the outlines of a small coal stove, and perhaps the warmth coming from it was more felt and appreciated at the time, than I can after fifty four years remember. I could not determine whether any one but myself occupied the cabin, it being so dark. Doubtless there were bunks in the cabin, but I was not a bit inclined to find and occupy one; perhaps if I had done so I would have learned that there were others there besides myself, inhabiting it. I sat on a stool that I might in the darkness have stumbled over—and passed the long and dreary night awake. As soon as day light appeared I promptly left the boat without knowing whether any other human being passed the night in the cabin with me. One would under the circumstances have easily imagined many unpleasant things during such a night, that would not be at all pleasant to any one, in fact, I was after leaving the boat impressed with the thought that I would much rather spend a night in the open on the cold ground than in a dark and dreary cabin of a canal boat again.

I rejoined my comrades early in the morning and found they had learned where some food could be purchased to satisfy our hunger, having obtained such we wasted no time over our scanty repast as we had to obtain a coffin and get everything ready for the steamboat for Washing-

ton that would leave at 9 o'clock in the forenoon of that day.

After some delay in ascertaining the place to find the proper government officer to whom we should apply for a coffin we obtained one. We had no opportunity to gratify our wish that the body of our dead comrade be sent home in such a coffin as our regard for him prompted. The coffins provided by the government were all of one quality of pine wood.

We learned later, that the body of our comrade "was dressed and rested enclosed in an elegant coffin" before being seen by the bereaved mother.

Every preparation was carefully made by the comrades for the last resting place of the dead comrade they could assist in providing for him; all of his belongings—that no doubt his mother would treasure—were enclosed in the coffin. The body of our comrade who had suffered with us hardships and privations was reverently borne by his comrades to the boat, and feelingly placed along with long rows of coffins of the dead. The faithful detail had now finished their part of our solemn mission; when in tears and silence, they withdrew, in sadness!

"We parted in silence; our cheeks were wet
With the tears that were past control."

The comrades who had so faithfully accompanied me, bade me good bye at the boat and then proceeded to return; and I earnestly hoped it would be less arduous for them while returning to camp.

I was very thankful, for the prompt and efficient service rendered by the faithful detail on our passage down Aquia Creek.

I departed on the boat for Washington along with the honored and heroic dead, that had been precious husbands, sons or brothers, and had been sacrificed for the salvation of our Republic!

After an uneventful but pleasant passage of fifty miles or more, of the Potomac River that I had passed up in a transport in 1861 while a member of the Second Regiment Connecticut Volunteers that answered the first call of Lincoln, I reached my destination the same day of my departure from Aquia Creek Landing.

Without delay I expressed the body of my comrade by Adams Express, to the address of Judge Edgar Bartlett (a great friend of soldiers) in Ansonia, Connecticut; and at once sent him a telegraphic message advising him of the fact, that he could take charge of the body on its arrival; and at his discretion inform the poor Mother of the death of her son. The aged Mother had not yet been advised of her son's death, or even of his having been sick. The Mother had been spared two or three weeks of great anxiety.

There was ample time and opportunity after attending to the duty assigned me to purchase a uniform and sword, proper for a commissioned officer of my rank in the infantry.

One can imagine the pleasure experienced while purchasing my outfit, along with the thoughts of my having been promoted. I realized that I had been chosen from many worthy loyal and able ones; and commissioned to take charge if called upon, and command noble men that were engaged in a great conflict, battling for the preservation of our Republic! I had reason to feel highly honored—as any one would have been—by the trust reposed in me, by the Governor of the great State of Connecticut.

I was conscious that I had earned a promotion, after one year of faithful service as First Sergeant; under two efficient and worthy officers, Captain Sanford E. Chaffee, and Captain John H. Doolittle; yet, I was none the less grateful to the one whom I believed had secured my commission for me.

I ask the pardon of readers, for presenting here the

following testimonial from Surgeon J. Wadsworth Terry of my regiment, given me many years after the close of the great conflict, which I offer as corroboration of the truthfulness of my statement that I had earned my promotion:—"As orderly of Co. B, during the early part of our regimental history," he says. "I looked upon you as second to none of similar rank in the regiment, and when you received your promotion as 2d Lieutenant, I felt that you had justly earned it by the faithful discharge of your duty. As an officer you always had a high character in the regiment for personal worth and fidelity to duty."

I remained over night in Washington, at a good hotel and rested in a bed, so comfortable; and thought it much more comfortable than sleeping at the front, on the cold ground in Winter time or even in a hut there in Summer time.

I left Washington, by boat for Aquia Creek Landing—to rejoin my regiment—on the forenoon of the 25th of February, and I departed without the least regret. I was eager to join my comrades that were so loyally banded together in a righteous cause.

I reached the landing at night, and after ascertaining the direction leading towards our camp; and had walked about four miles in much mud and in darkness; and over a road made by army wagons, that I had never before traveled I reached our camp; and with the feeling as though I had "got home." I was very tired, and hungry, not having eaten anything since my start from Washington.

I succeeded in getting back to the camp of my regiment and rejoined my comrades within three days as commanded.

I find by a letter that I wrote to my dear mother—that she had carefully preserved for many years—that after my return to camp from Washington I was unwell, having contracted a very severe cold when I went to Washington, that settled all over me; that I had a very sore throat, and

was threatened with a fever. How it was with my comrades that accompanied me down Aquia Creek, after getting back, I am unable to record. Their part of the task was much more severe than mine as in addition to their exposure to the cold and piercing wind, they broke up the ice and forced the craft along, which required much hard labor.

At rejoining my regiment (which was done with increased enthusiasm) there was the same increasing efficiency in the regiment that had been noticeable soon after General Hooker assumed command of the Army of the Potomac, January 26th, 1863. It was evident there was a master mind in control of the Army of the Potomac; and it was an imperative necessity, as a considerable portion had been but 55 days before, defeated in the battle of Fredericksburg, and in a degree demoralized and dispirited.

GALLANT FIGHTING JOE HOOKER

"Fighting 'Joe' Hooker," who became commander of the Army of the Potomac; and commanded at the battle of Chancellorsville, was graduated at West Point in 1837, and prepared for warfare.

He served in the "Florida War;" and the "Mexican War." In the latter war it is recorded that he at once made himself conspicuous for gallantry; and was brevetted. When Gen. Scott assumed command of the American forces Captain Hooker was made his assistant Adj't. General. He went through the campaign from Vera Cruz to the City of Mexico and so distinguished himself as to win two brevets.

In 1853 he resigned from the army having served his country with distinction.

At the outbreak of the "Civil War," Joseph Hooker promptly offered his services to the Federal Government and was at once commissioned to command a brigade,

From that time, he was in active service; and made himself conspicuous in many engagements and battles.

Brig. General Hooker was of the regular army; and 49 years of age, when selected with great confidence by Lincoln, January 26, 1863, to command the Army of the Potomac.

General Hooker won the title of "Fighting Joe Hooker" from his pronounced fighting qualities displayed during his services on the "Peninsula" in the "Siege of Yorktown," "Battle of Fair Oaks," during the "Seven Days Fight" and at "Malvern Hill."

Before its march on the Chancellorsville campaign, April 27, 1863, the "Army of the Potomac" had been marvellously transformed, within three months time, under the superior ability of our commander. His skill in organizing equalled his bravery.

The superior skill and ability of our indefatigable commander, was apparent in the great improvement he made in the physical conditions, discipline and morale of the troops under his command.

The "Army of the Potomac" was never in a better condition. Gen. Hooker may not have been far from the truth when he remarked to Lincoln after the grand review April 8th, 1863, "I have the finest army on the planet!"

GRAND REVIEW OF THE 12th ARMY CORPS, ARMY OF THE POTOMAC, BEFORE THE CHANCELLORSVILLE CAMPAIGN:—

What a grand and memorable day was April 8th, 1863, to the 20th Regiment Connecticut Volunteers! From early dawn of the day we were elated and filled with lively anticipations, for we were to be reviewed (along with the 12th Army Corps) by the now immortal Lincoln who many of the boys had in 1860 helped to elect ruler of the Nation, and were banded together to aid him in his gigantic efforts

to save the Union from disruption by armed domestic foes.

On that memorable day the regiments of Boys in Blue with their beautiful colors thrown to the breeze, stepped lightly to the inspiring music of the fife and drum and proudly marched to the reviewing grounds. There they waited patiently in line for the transpiring of a memorable event. Finally, approaching the right of the line of the magnificent array of "Boys in Blue," there appeared to their view a grand scene, long remembered!

"This is the place, stand still, my steed--
Let me review the scene!"

A gathering of conspicuous horsemen in the distance now advancing rapidly upon their fiery steeds, galloping and prancing with their brilliant trappings, first drew our attention. Then came the sound of the rattling and clang of scabbards, with the heavy tread and clatter of horses' hoofs.

First came nearer to view on his steed, the tall and impressive figure of Lincoln, taller seemingly yet, and more imposing and inspiring to the "Boys in Blue."

Next to excite our admiration was Gen. Joseph Hooker, the commander of the Army of the Potomac (the hope of the Republic), who accompanied the now immortal Lincoln.

"Fighting 'Joe' Hooker" came along so erect, on his white and noble steed; looking the perfect ideal of a dashing, gallant and brave soldier that he was. He truly represented to the "Boys in Blue," the dashing chivalrous soldier of whom they had read of in history. And how he inspired confidence and awakened enthusiasm! Then came the illustrious, Gen. Henry W. Slocum, the staunch commander of the 12th Army Corps accompanied by his staff and loyal Generals with their staffs.

How proudly the "Boys in Blue" saluted Lincoln as the illustrious stately galloped past along the line!

How soldierly and proudly we marched by column of companies; and how exalted we were as we passed before Lincoln in the illustrious group, that assembled to review us while on the march!

“Illustrions acts high raptures do infuse
And every conqueror creates a muse.”

As I passed before the now immortal Lincoln and saluted him, I was so exalted physically, and thrilled to every part of my being, I marched past as though lifted up and needed not the earth to walk upon!

I did not intend giving an extended and complete history of my regiment and have not done so. I will here record in part, however, that which will be convincing to one that the regiment contributed its full share of heroic service towards saving our glorious Republic! The 20th Connecticut Volunteers, served in the “Army of the Potomac” and participated in the arduous campaigns and battles of Chancellorsville and Gettysburg. The regiment also served in the “Army of the West,” participating in the numerous and fierce battles to Atlanta, and its capture; and was in Sherman’s march to the sea; and served with honor, in the great conflict to its triumphant ending!

THE VICTORY AND SURVIVAL OF OUR REPUBLIC TO BLESS ALL MANKIND.

It was through the favor of God! and the wisdom of Lincoln, the loyalty of the people, the valor of the Navy, and the Army of the “Boys in Blue” that the Union was restored and the glorious Republic saved to a united people; and “That form and substance of government, whose leading object is to elevate the condition of men, to lift the artificial weights from all shoulders, to clear the paths of laudable pursuits for all, to afford all an unfettered start and a fair chance in the race of life,” survives! and the inalienable rights to Life, Liberty and the pursuits of

Happiness " is perpetuated; to the blessing of the people of our glorious Republic; and as an example for the whole world!

Government of the People, by the People, and for the People—thus simply described by Abraham Lincoln—is a necessity of civilization, said Charles Sumner, not only because of that republican equality without distinction of birth which it establishes, but for its assurance of permanent peace. * * * * To the people alone, he said, can mankind look for the repose of nations; but the Republic is the embodied people. All hail, he proclaimed, to the Republic, equal guardian of all and angel of peace!

INTERESTING AND PATRIOTIC LETTER OF CIVIL WAR TIME

Soon after the burial—in Ansonia, Connecticut, on February 28—of my comrade Judson Lewis, I received, while at the front in Virginia, a most grateful letter from his aged and bereaved mother; and I regret being unable to present here a copy. I lost it while at the front. I was more fortunate, in preserving to this day—by sending it home to my mother—a most interesting letter I received 54 years ago, while in camp near Stafford Court House, Va., from Judge Bartlett, of Ansonia, Connecticut, relating to his receiving; and taking charge of the body on its arrival in Ansonia, of my comrade Lewis, I had expressed to him from Washington; and his attending to the burial.

I will here give a copy of the letter in part; and I have no doubt it will be read with much interest by any one of the later generation, as it sheds much light on the political situation in the state of Connecticut at the time the letter was written. Judge Bartlett was clear in his discernment of the political situation, and fully competent to write upon it.

The letter shows the loyalty of one of many staunch citizens of the country at a most critical period of our

national existence; as well as a most ardent friend of the patriotic soldiers who were so valiantly battling for the Union to save it from disruption! The letter of Judge Bartlett here follows:

Ansonia, Ct., February 28, 1863

Lieut. George W. Sherman.

Dear Sir:

Your telegram relating to receiving the body of Judson Lewis, was received at 6 P. M. same day of date, Feb. 24th.

The telegram when it reached here, read, Judson Denis or Dewis, and after some inquiry I was satisfied that it meant Lewis, and I informed his friends accordingly, which was the first intimation they had of either his sickness or death. The body reached here Thursday evening, 26th, and on examination proved to be in excellent condition, and from appearance, one would hardly suppose that he had been dead twenty-four hours. With the consent of his friends I gave the body in charge of the Undertaker who dressed it, and enclosed it in an elegant coffin, before taking it to his Mother. Today I have seen his body carried to his long resting place! Peace to his ashes!

So hardy and robust as he used to be, I should picked him out as the last one of the company to have fallen under the duties of the camp.

His friends have not yet, heard anything regarding his last sickness, or cause of death.

They had not heard from him in about four weeks. At that time he claimed being well and hearty. There has been a rumor, that he froze to death on picket duty, but I can find no authority for the report * * * * * I am very sorry to hear of so many of Co. B on the sick list, and earnestly hope that the opening of Spring and the return of dry weather and ground will restore them all to health, and encourage their hearts to go forward in the sacred

yet glorious duty of upholding the "Flag of the Free" and save the Union from overthrow and ruin.

My dear Sir, we are almost strangers, and I do not know your political creed, but let me tell you, that the enemies of the Union, are not all in the front of your army, we have them here in old Connecticut, and even in old —, men who are utterly lost to every patriotic impulse, and I verily believe would sooner see the Union armies annihilated, the nation broken up into a thousand fragments, than any injury should happen to the so-called Democratic Party, or that Slavery should in any way be interfered with. They had rather save Slavery, than the Union, and if the question was, today, between Jeff Davis, or George Washington for next President would vote for Jeff Davis. Have you seen the doings of the Copperhead Convention at Hartford? I will send you with this a paper containing them. Read them and then realize if you can, that such language was used anywhere this side of Richmond. It makes me blush for my Native State. On account of so many Union men in the army, the Copperheads think they will elect the traitor—. It is possible, but I do not think probable, for I cannot but believe that there is latent loyalty enough yet in the state to defeat such open and avowed treason as was proclaimed at the Hartford Convention, if not then God save the State! For I honestly believe that if Tom Seymour is elected Governor, he will bring this State into collision with the U. S. Government, which will result in civil war here at home. What we want above everything else, to utterly squelch these Copperheads, is one or two substantial victories of our armies over the Rebels. It would infuse a new life and spirit into the people, and cheer and encourage their hearts and make the Copperheads slink back into their dens.

Had it not been for some of the same reptiles among the Starred and shoulder strapped gentry I believe the Army of the Potomac would not have been stuck all Winter in Virginia mud.

I earnestly hope, yet to hear of a glorious and honored name recorded on the pages of this war, by Co. B, 20th Regt., C. Vols. and you may be assured you are not forgotten, but that the prayers, and earnest wishes of hundreds of anxious hearts daily ascend to the God of Battles in behalf of Co. B, that He will watch over and protect them, give them courage in the hour of danger and victory in battle!

Remember me to the officers and members of Co. B, and in the future as heretofore, they can command my services in anything I can do for them, though I trust I may not be called upon, to receive more of their bodies silent in death, that I may be permitted ere long to welcome them home from the field of victory, crowned by a glorious Peace through treason and Rebellion subdued, and our loved Union preserved in all its integrity. * * * * *

From the fact, that a large share of the boxes sent to the soldiers from here, are brought to me to mark, and from taking considerable interest in the affairs of Co. B, an impression prevails with a great many that I am the regular authorized agent for said Co. I claim no agency, but what belongs to every citizen, that is, to do all that can be done to cheer and encourage them and make their situation as comfortable as possible.

God bless Co. B, and when the hour comes may they make their mark high on the records of fame!

Sincerely your friend,

E. BARTLETT.

P. S. Any time you are at a loss to know how to kill an hour in camp life, write me, and I will assure a speedy reply.

The "Copperheads" frequently referred to in the letter of Judge Bartlett were men who during the Civil war remained in the North and sympathized with and aided the Confederate and not the "Union cause," and were

so-called because they were regarded as attacking the Union treacherously in the rear, as Copperhead snakes attack.

It will not be amiss to say, that Judge Bartlett was not alone in the fear that while so many Union men were absent at the front in the armies, that the Democratic party would secure control of the State of Connecticut and through the machinations of the disloyal part of that party use its power to embarrass the Federal Government, that was at times so sorely pressed.

Appeals at one time in the Civil War were sent home both by officers and men from nearly every regiment from Connecticut while at the front, urging the electors to elect such officers to serve the State that were known to be loyal to the Union cause.

One of the appeals read in part as follows: "Men of Connecticut! did you encourage us * * * * to leave home, friends, everything to fight, * * * only that we might look back, and see foes not less malignant, and not less dangerous, assailing us from behind? We pray you not to crush our resolution and palsy our arms by electing for your governor and ours a man who hopes for our defeat and humiliation!"

The State of Connecticut finally granted to its soldiers while absent at the front in the service of the United States and were eligible, the right to vote. That, allayed the fears of the loyal citizens.

THE FUNERAL AND BURIAL OF A SOLDIER.

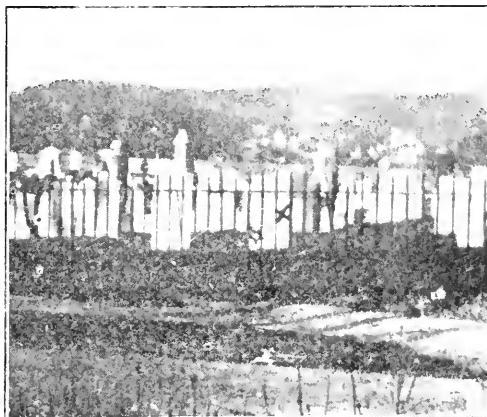
The body of our comrade reached his relatives in a remarkable state of preservation; one relative remembers that the cheeks were as red as in life. How fortunate was the Mother that she could look for the last time upon the face of her soldier son, with the absence of the appearance of grim death. It was not so with many other Mothers during the Civil War, because many soldier sons were

brought back to them disfigured beyond recognition. O, how much longer will instigators and fiendish war makers be allowed to escape their just punishment!

The impressive funeral services for our comrade were held on Saturday, February 28th, at the house of his patriotic mother from whom the loyal son had but a few months before, so affectionately parted. Rev. Mr. French Rector of Christ Episcopal Church, Ansonia, officiated at the funeral, which was attended by dear relatives. With Judge Edgar Bartlett, the staunch friend of the "Boys in Blue," were loyal and patriotic citizens to pay respect due to the memory of a Union soldier.

The burial was in what was known as upper Derby Burying Ground; but now known as the Elm Street Cemetery which is within the limits of the City of Ansonia.

A picture showing a portion of the Elm Street Cemetery viewed from Elm Street, where the body of our Comrade peacefully lies with that of his Father, Mother and other relatives.



This ancient and hallowed burial place in its serenity, ever overlooks the silent, flowing Naugatuck.

Beyond, loom up impressively to view beaming and everlasting hills, reflecting o'er the dark valley, a scene suggestive of peace and repose; and from above the hill-tops a mellow light sheds its rays o'er the valley to mingle with the fragrance of beautiful flowers over the mounds of departed ones!

The headstone with a cross, shown in the picture of the Cemetery indicates the grave of Comrade Lewis.

Following is the inscription on our Comrade's headstone, and the appropriate epitaph thereon inscribed:—

Judson Lewis

A member of Co. B, 20th Regt. C. V.

Died

At Stafford Court House, Va.

February 21st, 1863

Aged 29 years.

His Country's hour of peril came
Thousands went forth he did the same,
Then let us when we tell their fame,

In grateful memory breathe his name.

"No greater earthly honor could the sons
of Freedom crave,
Than to sing the fame of soldiers above
a soldier's grave.

For all our fallen comrades be it with reverence said:

"Do not forget them while they sleep,
With earth for a pillow in silence so deep!
Give them remembrance as men that were true,
This, at least, to the soldiers is due."

SOLDIERS MONUMENT AT DERBY, CONN.

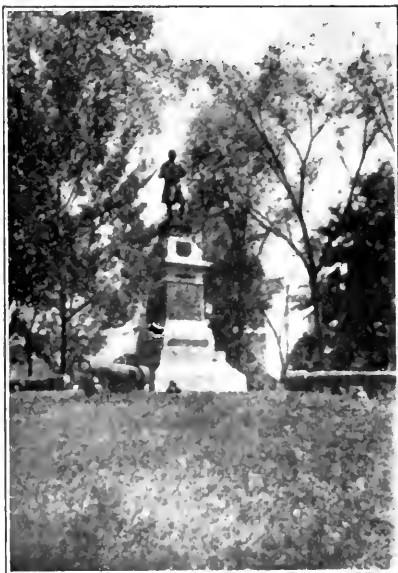
This beautiful monument, was erected on the public green of the city of Derby, by patriotic and grateful people of the city; and reverently dedicated by them to the memory of the noble men from the city, who lost their lives in the service of their country during the heroic struggle for the preservation of our glorious Republic!

Among the names, of the honored ones on the monument so justly inscribed who unselfishly answered their country's call, is found the name of Judson Lewis of Co. B, 20th Regiment Connecticut Volunteers!

“Down through the coming ages let swelling
anthems ring,
The tribute to their memories a nation’s heart
should bring!

“Tis well to honor thus our dead,
They went forth from peace to strife,
For you their blood was freely shed!”

“We know that flowers shall lose their bloom
And idle dreams shall swiftly fade,
But in our hearts, in blood, is writ
The sacrifices our heroes made.”



A picture of the Soldiers' Monument at Derby, Connecticut.



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